The Bridges of Hartford, 1810 to Mid-1940s

PURPOSE & SCOPE: This exhibit tells the story of the succession of bridges crossing the Connecticut River at Hartford, Connecticut via picture postcards. The focus is on the bridges connecting Morgan Street in Hartford with Hartford Avenue (now Connecticut Boulevard) in East Hartford, from the earliest iteration in 1810 through to the current version, known as the Bulkeley Bridge. These bridges were the only ones to cross the Connecticut River between Windsor to the North and Middletown to the South until 1942 when the Charter Oak bridge was opened to traffic.

TREATMENT: The story will be told in chronological order. Postcards from various time periods will be used to illustrate the story, although most cards will have been printed before 1935.

Text for the main story line will be in Times New Roman (11 point), while deltiological information will be presented in sans-serif Arial (10 point). Secondary story text and interesting tidbits will use italic Times New Roman.

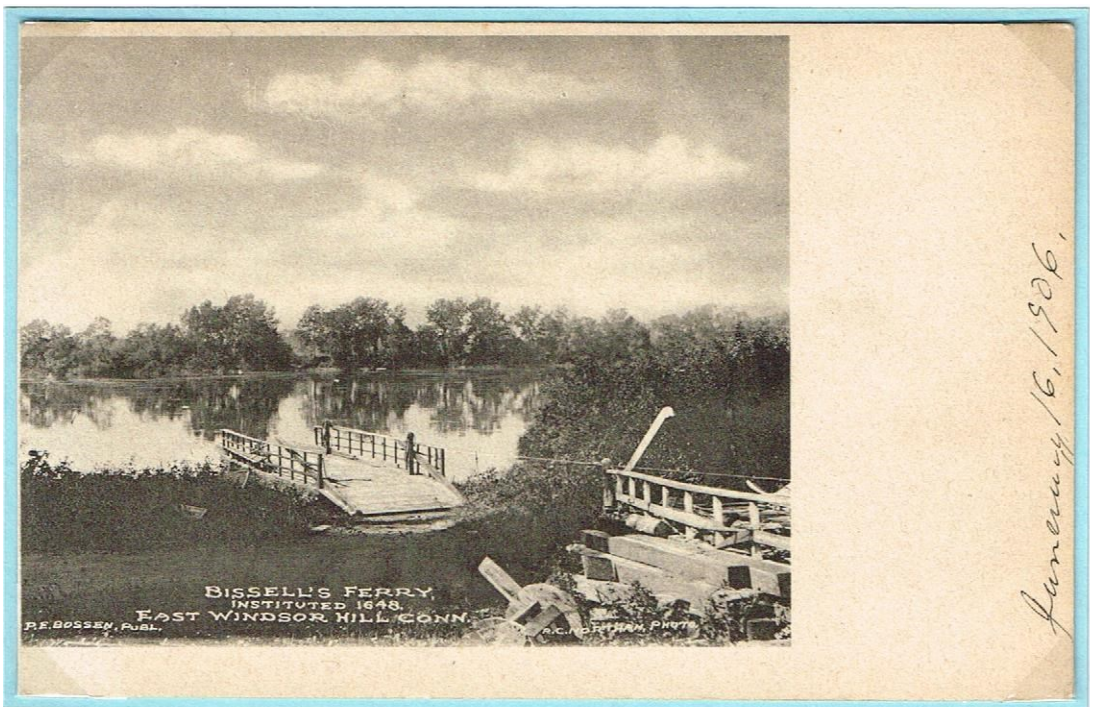
The story will be divided into three sections:

I. Early Bridges & Conveyances
II. The Stone Bridge
III. Epilog: Other Bridges

Each section will start with a section title in a double-line box. Section headers will appear on each page in the upper-left corner of each page (or double-page), and headers summarizing the story will appear in the upper-right of the pages.

Key and important items are highlighted with a double-line blue border.

Before the first bridge was built at Hartford, goods and people crossed the Connecticut River using ferries, such as Bissell's Ferry, shown below, which operated from East Windsor Hill since 1648. The Ferry at Hartford was leased to Thomas Cadwell starting in 1681.



Undivided back; Published by P.E. Bossen, South Windsor, CT, R.C. Northen, photographer
Printed by The Albertype Company, Brooklyn, NY via collotype (a.k.a. albertype)

Hartford Ferry Tolls

1d silver - man
2d other pay - man
3d silver - horse & man
6d other pay - horse & man

If not of this town …

6d - horse and man
2d - man